**Leach Field Alternatives**

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updated: July 5, 2010

[I want to do this!](http://www.ehow.com/account/simple_login.aspx) What's This?

1. [](http://i.ehow.com/images/a06/cf/bg/leach-field-alternatives-1.1-800X800.jpg)

wetland image by Colin Buckland from [Fotolia.com](http://www.fotolia.com)

Wetlands are one alternative to leach fields.

Systems that treat sewage from buildings that are not hooked up to city sewers are onsite sewage disposal systems, or septic systems. Septic systems commonly use a septic tank to pretreat the sewage and then a leach field to finish the [job](http://www.ehow.com/careers/). There are sites though where leach fields will not [work](http://www.ehow.com/careers/). When a site has ground water that is close to the surface, or when it has poor drainage, leach field alternatives offer safe ways of treating the sewage. Each jurisdiction that approves onsite sewage disposal systems views these alternatives differently so you have to check with them regarding their acceptance.

**Aerobic**

1. Standard septic tanks pretreat the sewage without air so they essentially just provide a place for solids to settle out. Aerobic tanks have pumps that inject air into the sewage causing decomposition and a highly treated effluent. Since the effluent is cleaner it can be absorbed in a smaller absorption field, or treated further in another tank. These systems are used to replace failed standard septic systems. They also make onsite disposal possible where there is high groundwater or bedrock, small plots without enough land for a standard system or poorly draining soil.

**Constructed Wetlands**

1. Wetlands are nature’s way of cleaning water and humans have figured out how to construct them so they will do the same with sewage. Constructed wetlands are especially effective in treating wastewater from multiple sites when housing densities are high. This helps prevent the soils from becoming saturated. The subsurface flow wetland keeps all effluent underground and is the most common for residential use. It typically uses two cells with water-loving plants whose roots create the right environment to breakdown the waste in the water.

**Recirculating**

1. The recirculating sand filter cleans the effluent that is pumped through it. The sand filter is a container filled with layers of sand and gravel. The sand lowers the pollutants and it traps suspended solids making the effluent less likely to clog up soils that do not drain well. Once the sewage is treated, sometimes twice depending on the site, it is released to an absorption field. This step is done in pressurized doses so the soil is not overwhelmed by large amounts of effluent at one time.

**Fixed Activated Sludge**

1. This system is especially good at converting nitrates and ammonia into nitrogen gas. Nitrates and ammonia are considered pollutants. This system constantly cycles the effluent through an aerobic tank and then back into the septic tank. The aerobic tank can be a smaller tank within the larger septic tank. The sewage leaves the septic tank and is either treated in an additional tank, or is released to an absorption field.

Read more: [Leach Field Alternatives | eHow.com](http://www.ehow.com/list_6700400_leach-field-alternatives.html#ixzz12Tk74ama) <http://www.ehow.com/list_6700400_leach-field-alternatives.html#ixzz12Tk74ama>

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